



4th Annual Arizona Substance Abuse Conference

Pointe Hilton Squaw Peak

Gov. Jan Brewer's Opening Remarks

Wednesday, April 29, 2009

Good morning. Welcome to the fourth Annual Arizona Substance Abuse Conference.

Your presence here today indicates your strong commitment to fighting substance abuse in this state.

Substance abuse is one of the most wrenching issues facing our communities and our families.

Even while education and prevention efforts keep many Arizonans from experimenting with illegal substances, unfortunately, many already suffer from substance abuse and addiction.

To truly impact the problem of substance abuse, there must be a balanced, collaborative and sustainable approach to prevention, treatment and enforcement.

This is the goal of the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership

It is the mission of the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership to ensure community driven, agency-supported outcomes to prevent and reduce the negative impacts of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs by building and sustaining partnerships between prevention, treatment and enforcement.

The Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership is composed of representatives from state government entities, federal entities and community organizations. It serves as the single statewide council on substance abuse prevention, enforcement and treatment.

Members are working with colleagues from state and federal agencies as well as many grassroots community organizations to make real progress in addressing four Strategic Focus Areas for 2009.

These focus areas are Underage Drinking Prevention, Prescription Drug Abuse, Drug Endangered Children and Prevention and Community Partnerships.

As the Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership explores the Strategic Focus Areas, it will be critical to advance initiatives that improve efficiency and ensure that resources are targeted toward areas with the greatest need.

The conference today and tomorrow has been designed to focus on addressing substance abuse among critical populations, including women, veterans and justice-involved individuals.

Throughout the conference, presenters will help to provide participants with an understanding of the impact of substance abuse on critical populations, and will set the stage for Arizona's efforts to address these needs.

Tomorrow, you will be asked for your input about how to best serve Arizona's critical populations. You will focus on ways to strengthen data collection, provide culturally competent services, facilitate access to services and strengthen best practices for serving critical populations.

You are the important stakeholders in addressing substance abuse issues in Arizona. Without you and the work that you do, Arizona would not be able to achieve success in addressing the problems associated with substance abuse. This conference offers all of us the opportunity to collaborate and work together to ensure that we are operating in the most effective and efficient ways to combat substance abuse, particularly among critical populations.

In this spirit I encourage all of you to work together in our prevention, treatment and law enforcement efforts. We all have a common goal of ending substance abuse and the destruction it causes, and it will take all of us in our various roles to achieve this goal.

I would like to thank each of you for your support and, the work that you do in addressing substance abuse.

To ensure a safe, healthy and prosperous future for all Arizonans, we will continue to seek innovative ways to win the fight against substance abuse in our communities. Communities must come together and make a commitment to attack substance abuse on every front.

If we work together and refuse to give up, we can end the devastation, get treatment for those who need it and stop the traffickers who do so much harm. It's our best shot at ensuring the health and safety of our communities, our families and our future. Thank you.